



GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY

Volume One, Number One

First Quarter 2004

Inside this issue:

Message from the Director	1
DC Responds to Hurricane Isabel	2
DC Accredited by EMAP	2
Childs-Pair Appointed Acting DCEMA Director;	3
DC to Launch New Citizen Emergency Notification Systems	3
News Briefs	4
New at EMA	4
People in the News	4
Calendar	5

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA  
EMERGENCY  
MANAGEMENT AGENCY  
2000 14th St., NW  
8th Floor  
Washington, DC 20009  
Phone: (202) 727-6161  
<http://dcema.dc.gov>

## Message from the Director

Since September 11, 2001, jurisdictions throughout the United States have been confronted with new vulnerabilities and have had to find new approaches and new resources to deal with them. Although much attention has been focused on preparing for the type of terrorism-related incidents exemplified by the events of September 11, 2001, it was severe weather last year that caused the District to activate its response plan—in February 2003 for a record snowfall and again in September for Hurricane Isabel. Both of these events caused major damage and disruption to city services and resulted in presidential disaster declarations.

In addition to the two natural disasters that occurred in 2003, we also experienced a HAZMAT spill at a public high school, forcing the relocation of students, teachers and staff for over a month. We managed over 800 special events, both large and small, ranging from the thousands of football fans that converged on city streets in early September during the NFL Kick-off celebration on the National Mall, to the many walks, runs, rallies, festivals and marches that took place most weekends.

With challenge comes opportunity, and I'm pleased to say we met the challenges, seized the opportunities, and used them as stepping stones to turn those challenges into achievements. I won't dwell on those accomplishments here; they are featured elsewhere in this publication. However, I would like to take a moment to outline several of the critical challenges facing us as we move forward:

- Self-insurance—Liability issues are a major component of any disaster. Over the next year DCEMA will work with appropriate city agencies, such as the Office of the Corporation Counsel, to review best practices across the 50 states in order to develop a self-insurance policy for the District of Columbia.
- Upgrades to and maintenance of the EOC—The new Emergency Operations Center (EOC) at DCEMA has greatly enhanced the city's ability to manage its emergency response. The new EOC provides state-of-the art technology that gives the Mayor and other city leaders the ability to receive the most current, up-to-date information in order to manage the city's response to emergencies and disasters. However, equipment wears out and new technologies emerge, so there is an ever present need to upgrade and maintain the technology needed to support the facility.
- Sustained funding—In fiscal year 2002, DCEMA received a direct federal appropriation for preparedness activities. Much of what we have been able to accomplish, including receipt of national accreditation, the renovation of the EOC, the development of our 39 community emergency management plans and planning and training activities for various stakeholders, has been accomplished using these and other federal resources. But if we are to sustain and indeed surpass our current level of preparedness we will need continued federal and local resources.

I'm grateful to Mayor Williams for the confidence in my ability he demonstrated by designating me to serve as acting director following the resignation of former director Peter LaPorte. Having served for the past four years as DCEMA deputy director, I was able to participate in the development and enhancement of the city's emergency management program following September 11, including managing the District's successful application for accreditation under the Emergency Management Accreditation Program (EMAP).

Working under the mayor's leadership and with the support of our local, federal and regional partners, DCEMA will continue to build on the foundation established over the last two years to sustain the District's status as the most prepared jurisdiction in the country.

—Barbara Childs-Pair



## AGENCY WEBSITES

*Emergency Center  
Information*

*Alert DC*

*Fire and Emergency  
Medical Services*

*Metropolitan Police  
Department*

*District Department of  
Transportation*

*Department of Public  
Works*

*Department of Health*

# DC Responds to Hurricane Isabel; Receives Presidential Disaster Declaration

The District of Columbia was ready to respond when Hurricane Isabel blew through the city on September 18, bringing torrential rains and gale-force winds. The city monitored National Hurricane Center forecasts for several days before the storm made landfall and took steps to help citizens prepare for its effects. More than 20,000 sandbags were distributed to city residents in anticipation of possible flooding. Mayor Anthony Williams declared a state of emergency at 4 pm on September 17, paving the way for a possible presidential disaster declaration and the ensuing federal disaster assistance. Emergency parking restrictions—normally reserved for snow events—were put into effect at noon on September 18.



Although not as severe as originally forecast, Isabel caused extensive wind and water damage, resulting in flooding in low-lying areas and extended power outages due to downed trees on power lines. Shelters were opened at several locations across the city and more than 700,00 pounds of wet and dry ice were distributed to residents. More than 20,000 residents were fed, either with hot meals distributed at multiple sites across the city or through certificates redeemable at several area restaurants.

On September 20 President Bush signed a disaster declaration for the District, authorizing the use of federal disaster funds and emergency resources to help families and businesses recover from the effects of the hurricane. The declaration made the District eligible for aid including grants to residents to help pay for temporary housing, home repairs and other serious disaster-related expenses. Low interest loans from the US Small Business Administration were also made available to cover residential and business losses not fully compensated by insurance. In addition, the District was also eligible for federal funds to help the city government pay 75 percent of the eligible costs for debris removal and emergency services related to the hurricane, including requested emergency work undertaken by the federal government.

Over 240 applications for individual assistance have been approved under the Other Needs Assistance (ONA) program for Hurricane Isabel. A total of \$265,853.97 has been disbursed to date. The ONA program provides assistance to individuals for uninsured essential losses incurred as a result of a disaster. In addition, District government agencies and District-based public non-profit organizations are expected to receive more than \$5.2 million under the public assistance disaster declaration for Hurricane Isabel. The public assistance program reimburses agencies for 75 percent of costs incurred as a result of hurricane response and recovery.

## DC Among First Two "States" Accredited by EMAP

The District of Columbia's emergency management program has received full accreditation by the Emergency Management Accreditation Program (EMAP). The announcement was made September 4, 2003, by Ellis M. Stanley Sr, chairperson of the EMAP Commission, at the National Emergency Management Association (NEMA) meeting in Seattle. The District was among the first two "states" to earn this designation; Florida also was granted accreditation on September 4.

"I am immensely proud and pleased that our city has earned this national recognition for the excellence of its emergency management program," said District of Columbia Mayor Anthony Williams. "As one of only two jurisdictions in the nation to have earned this distinction, the District has demonstrated that it is one of the most prepared jurisdictions in the nation. All of the agencies that are part of our District Response Plan should be justifiably proud of this accomplishment."

EMAP is a voluntary, non-governmental process in which state and local emergency management programs undergo self-assessment, documentation of activities and external review in order to determine compliance with the EMAP Standard, a set of criteria against which programs are measured. The standards are designed to indicate what a quality emergency management program encompasses.

Acting DC Emergency Management Director Barbara Childs-Pair, who managed the city's accreditation application process, said EMAP accreditation provides public validation of the city's preparedness efforts. "Although we felt that our efforts over the last two years had greatly improved and enhanced the city's level of preparedness, this public acknowledgement by an impartial, outside entity should remove any doubt about the efficacy of our plans and preparation," said Mrs Childs-Pair.

Accreditation is valid for five years from the date the EMAP Commission grants accreditation. Accredited programs are expected to maintain compliance with EMAP standards, keep proof of compliance up to date and conduct their activities in accordance with EMAP's goal of continuous improvement. An annual report summarizing the maintenance experience for the preceding year is due on the anniversary of accreditation.



## LINKS TO OTHER WEBSITES

*Department of Homeland Security*

*Federal Emergency Management Agency*

*Federal Bureau of Investigation*

# Barbara Childs-Pair Appointed Acting DCEMA Director; Andrew Jackson To Serve as Deputy

District of Columbia Mayor Anthony Williams appointed long-time DC Emergency Management Agency employee Barbara Childs-Pair to serve as the agency's acting director, effective November 1, 2003, following the resignation of former director Peter G. LaPorte.

Mrs. Childs-Pair attended Talladega College in Talladega, Alabama, where she majored in biology. She has worked in almost every capacity at the agency, beginning in 1973 as a clerk-typist. Most recently she served as DCEMA deputy director. Andrew L. Jackson Jr. will serve as the agency's acting deputy director. Col. Jackson joined the District of Columbia government following a 30-year career in the United States Army, where he attained the rank of Colonel before retiring in 1994.

## District to Launch New Citizen Emergency Notification Systems

The District of Columbia is in the process of upgrading or initiating four citizen emergency notification systems. DCEMA Acting Director Barbara Childs-Pair said the new systems along, with the improvements to the Emergency Alert System (EAS), will greatly enhance the city's ability to provide timely and more comprehensive emergency notification to citizens.

Currently, the District's primary means of emergency notification is EAS, formerly known as the emergency broadcast system. DCEMA is installing and testing new equipment at several area radio stations as part of its management of the EAS—a partnership with local media in which emergency messages are broadcast over local media outlets. The new equipment will allow DCEMA to transmit emergency messages to each of the stations simultaneously for broadcast to the public and for transmission to other local stations for their use. Citizens will be able to receive emergency information more rapidly from any of the participating EAS stations, including WTOP 1500 AM, 820 AM, 107.7 FM; WMAL 630 AM; WGMS 103.5 FM; WJZW 105.9 FM; WKYS 93.9 FM; WHFS 99.1 FM, and WPGC 95.5 FM.

DCEMA is also in the process of installing equipment at the National Weather Service (NWS) that will allow the weather service to receive emergency information from DCEMA for broadcast over the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) weather alert radio system. Supplementing the EAS will be three new notification/information systems:

- **Citizen Emergency Notification System (CENS)**—a telephone voice messaging system that allows emergency managers to notify citizens of an actual or impending incident that requires them to take some protective action (e.g. evacuate, shelter in place). The system allows emergency managers to select very precise geographic areas and call the phones in that area to deliver emergency instructions. Instructions can be delivered in multiple languages. Land lines will be automatically registered; cell phone users must register their cell phone numbers in order to participate in the system (the system will be modified at a future date to automatically register cell phone numbers). DCEMA expects the system to be operational in late winter/early spring of 2004.
- **Emergency Text Notification System**—a text notification system that will allow citizens to receive emergency messages on any text-capable device: cell phone, computer email, pagers and fax. Citizens must enroll online and be able to identify the type of device and the access number. Currently the system is running as a pilot in the Georgetown neighborhood. By early January 2004, the program will expand to include the Bloomingdale and Hillcrest neighborhoods and several communities in Ward 8. Pending successful completion of this introductory phase, the system will be available to the entire city by spring 2004.
- **Emergency Information Center (EIC) website**—a cross-agency portal for emergency preparedness information that also serves as the official DC government source of information during an emergency or disaster. During non-emergency conditions the EIC portal provides links to DC and national sites that have preparedness information including information about and links to all of the city's emergency notification systems. It also allows citizens to use GIS maps to quickly find medical, police, fire and other information. During emergencies the site provides immediate information about closures and other conditions pertaining to the emergency, including location specific information in both text and mapping format. This website is currently available and was used during Hurricane Isabel to display emergency information.

**Alert DC** will serve as the portal page for information about registration in and/or links to the various citizen notification systems.



## CONTACTS

### Director

Barbara Childs-Pair  
(202) 727-2775

### Deputy Director

Andrew L. Jackson, Jr.  
(202) 727-3150

### Chief of Staff

Tanya Mitchell  
(202) 673-2101, ext. 1152

### Public Information Officer

Jo'Ellen Gray Countee  
(202) 727-2985, ext. 1137

### Chief of Operations

Brian Hubbard  
(202) 673-2101, ext. 1177

### Deputy Chief of

Operations  
Kerry Payne  
(202) 673-2101, ext. 1183

### Manager - Training, Exercise, Mitigation & Plans

Chris Voss  
(202) 673-2101, ext. 1141

### Training Officer

John Woods  
(202) 673-2101, ext. 1188

### Mitigation Officer

Patrice White  
(202) 673-2101, ext. 1163

### Community Outreach Planner

Sandra Perkins  
(202) 673-2101, ext. 1169

## News Briefs

DCEMA is in the process of completing final revisions to the 39 community emergency management plans developed by the agency in 2002. The plans have been reviewed to ensure that all information is current and up to date. The revised plans will also include cluster maps so that residents can more easily determine the cluster in which their homes are located. Maps showing critical facilities such as hospitals, schools, fire stations and police facilities also will be included.

**Structural Mitigation Projects**—Five structural mitigation projects are set to begin soon, pending completion of environmental review and receipt of a grant award from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). The proposed projects involve pipe enlargements resurfacing, catch basin and inlet work in five locations: Appleton Street, NW; W Street, NW; Lingan Road, NW; Sherrier Place, NW, and Broad Branch Road in Rock Creek Park.

**Ballou Mercury Spill**—DCEMA was among the District agencies responding to a metallic mercury spill at Ballou High School on October 2, 2003. The incident resulted in closure of the school for more than a month and relocation of classes to the old Washington Convention Center while the spill was investigated and cleanup continued. DCEMA coordinated daily conference calls between public school administrators, health department officials, federal EPA representatives and other pertinent agencies. The agency also provided on-scene coordination of resources throughout the event.

**Hypothermia Season**—Hypothermia season in the District began November 1 and ran through March 15. Although the Department of Human Services (DHS) serves as the lead agency for the city's hypothermia plan, DCEMA plays a major role in ensuring its success. The plan goes into effect when either the wind chill or the actual temperature drops below 32. It calls for DCEMA to monitor the temperature through daily calls to the National Weather Service (NWS) and notify DHS and other appropriate officials if the forecast calls for temperatures to drop below freezing. When the plan is activated, DHS, in cooperation with the Community Partnership for the Prevention of Homelessness and the United Planning Organization (UPO), makes certain that persons living on the streets have access to shelter, including opening overflow shelter sites and providing transportation to those locations if needed. DCEMA maintains a supply of cots and blankets that can be pressed into service, if the need arises. The city also contracts with UPO to operate a hypothermia hotline that citizens can call if they see a person on the street in need of shelter.

## New at EMA

**Chris Voss** has joined DCEMA as director of the Training, Exercise, Mitigation and Planning (TEMP) division, effective September 2003. He replaced Steven Charvat, who resigned to become emergency management director at the University of Washington in Seattle. Mr. Voss has over 10 years of experience in emergency management consulting. Prior to joining DCEMA, he was a principal at the Marasco Newton Group (MNG) in charge of state and local emergency management programs. He earned a bachelor of science degree from the University of Connecticut and a master's degree from New York Institute of Technology. While at MNG, he worked as an onsite contractor supporting DCEMA's development of the District Response Plan (DRP), the Family Preparedness Guide and the Emergency Support Function Protective Action pocket guides. He is also an experienced first responder and supported the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Superfund Technical Assessment Team for over three years. **John Woods** became the new DCEMA training officer, replacing Carolyn Moss, who retired. Formerly, Mr. Woods was an employee development specialist/training coordinator at the District's Center for Workforce Development. He earned a bachelor of science degree from Cornell University.

## People in the News

**Kerry Payne**, deputy chief of operations, was among the top 20 city employees nominated to receive the 2003-2004 Cafritz Award given to outstanding District government employees. . . . DCEMA mitigation officer **Patrice White**, community outreach coordinator **Sandra Perkins**, and emergency management specialist **Leslie Harrison** took part in assessors training for the Emergency Management Accreditation Program, November 12 – 13, in Orlando, Florida. The training prepared them to serve as members of teams that will visit states seeking EMAP accreditation and review and assess documentation to determine if the states are in compliance with EMAP standards. Following the training, Perkins, White and Harrison attended the 51st Annual Conference of the International Association of Emergency Managers, also in Orlando . . . DCEMA Planning Officer **Michele Penick** attended the National Association of SARA Title III Program Officials and US Department of Transportation's Hazardous Materials Emergency Preparedness Grants Workshop Mid-Year Meeting, November 18 and 19 in Las Vegas, Nevada. The purpose of the meeting was to brief agency representatives on new initiatives and areas of interest under the Hazardous Materials Emergency Preparedness grant program. The program provides funding for hazardous materials training for local first responders. . . . DCEMA Acting Director **Barbara Childs-Pair** was among the speakers at the National Council of Negro Women's (NCNW) 51st National Convention, held December 2-7, 2003, at the Hyatt Regency Hotel on Capitol Hill. Mrs. Childs-Pair spoke at a December 5, education workshop on the topic *Leading Schools and Communities in Extraordinary Times: Emergency Preparedness Partnerships*. . . .



## Calendar

For more information on DCEMA training courses, contact the DCEMA Training Office at (202) 673-2101, ext. 1188, or visit the DCEMA website - <http://dcema.dc.gov>.

- |                             |  |
|-----------------------------|--|
| <b>3/03<br/>to<br/>3/11</b> | <b>MGT 313 Weapons of Mass Destruction</b><br>Incident Management/Unified Command, Management Level Training<br>George Washington University Virginia Campus<br>Room 121   |
| <b>3/20</b>                 | <b>Bicentennial March for Haitian Empowerment</b><br>10 am - 7 pm<br>Beginning at Washington Monument<br>Ending on the National Mall between 3rd and 4th Streets, NW<br>For more information, contact the Association for Haitian Empowerment, (202) 805-353 |
| <b>3/23<br/>to<br/>3/25</b> | <b>PER 210 Public Works</b><br>Planning for and Responding to a Terrorism/WMD Incident, Performance Level Training<br>8:30 am - 4 pm<br>Emergency Management Agency<br>2000 14th Street, NW, 8th floor<br>Washington, DC 20009                               |
| <b>3/24</b>                 | <b>Incident Response to Terrorist Bombings</b><br>Awareness Level Training<br>To be determined   |
| <b>4/03</b>                 | <b>Sakura Matsuri - Japanese Cherry Blossom Street Festival</b><br>11 am - 6 pm<br>Pennsylvania Avenue, NW between 9th and 13th Streets<br>For more information, contact the Japan-America Society of Washington, DC, (202) 833-2210                         |
| <b>4/03</b>                 | <b>National Cherry Blossom Festival Parade</b><br>10 am<br>Beginning at Constitution Avenue and 7th Street, NW<br>Ending at Constitution Avenue and 17th Street, NW  |
| <b>4/17</b>                 | <b>Race to Stop the Silence 10K</b><br>9:30 am   |

